



FÉLIX GUATTARI 2018-02-27

A MOLECULAR REVOLUTION

DOCUMENTATION,
GENERICSCIENCE

ABSTRACT MACHINE, ASSEMBLAGE, CAPITALISM, DELEUZE/GUATTARI, MARXISM,
MICROPOLITICS, MOLECULAR, NON-PHILOSOPHY

The third industrial revolution

The breaks between professional life, leisure and education, between private life and public life, the valorisation of serious mindedness, even being self-sacrificing, when it is a question of labour, seem to constitute the very foundations of every society. Despite the evolution of the techniques and modes of organisation of production, in 'experimental' sectors in particular, the traditional imagery of the 'world of work', the faciality traits of the manual labourer of the nineteenth century – those of the miner or the railworker for example – continue to serve as the basis for the stereotypes concerning labour, such as it is conveyed in primary school, amongst other places. If the labour is boring and repressive, it is not fundamentally because of a mode of production founded on the exploitation of workers, it is, above all, because it has to be this way, because the difficulty and the obstacles offer an opportunity to overcome laziness and innate bad habits. But if these clichés and allegories inherited from the first steps in the industrial revolution continue to provide a recipe for schools and for the mass media, they in fact correspond less and less to the libidinal models required by its current steps, which are sometimes characterised as a 'third industrial revolution' and which are centred on the chemical industry, atomic energy, automation and informatics. A coherent use of systems of machinic enslavement (optimised and adaptable commands, direct numerical control, self-learning systems, etc.) might permit the accelerated replacement of systems of human enslavement bearing directly on the body, the limbs and organs of workers. On the contrary, the system of production seems to reinforce the alienating constraints on work, as if for the sake of it, even in the most modern, the most automated of branches of production! Technical and scientific development as a whole tends towards the liquidation of fragmented, production line work, of the despotism of the jobsworths, and to a profound reorganisation of the break between hourly and monthly paid work on the one hand, and that of technicians and managers on the other. In reality the discipline and hierarchy that were essential to the 'armies of workers' of the twentieth century, only correspond today to the maintenance of repressive relations of production. In fact, they run counter to the development of production processes which are led to call on not just the body, the adeptness and the craft of workers, but also on their mind and, to a certain extent, their libido.

The extraction of the deterritorialised schemas **1** required by the new forms of the division of labour, the new organisation of

society and the generalisation of the regime of decoded flows imply a particular treatment of the collective power of semiotisation and of labour. The Chinese communists experienced this when, in 1949, immediately after taking power, and having decided to reinforce the numbers of the Chinese working class, they made a great many peasants come to the cities and the factories. These peasants were so disorientated and frightened by the noise of the machines and the agitation of the workers that it was decided that for a certain period of time, the newcomers would have no other task than to move freely around the workshops so as to get used to their new working conditions, to 'semiotise' their new environment. Collective mnemotechnics, in which 'Man could never do without blood, torture, sacrifices', **2** after the rule of 'ascetic priests', monastic discipline, after aristocratic 'etiquette', after the confinement of manufacturing and schools, after the reign of cramming and of 'competition animals' began to transfer the basic essentials of its 'memories' and a part of its logical mechanisms into informatics machines. **3** This doesn't in the least signify that informatics will be led to seize hold of the controls! It is even the contrary that might occur, the informatics revolution bringing unprecedented means for clearing the field of empty repetitions and opening up the possibility for the focusing of human labour on decision-making processes that by nature escape from the gridding of informatics, which arise, that is, from the economy of desire. **4** It will thus be less and less necessary to learn the list of subprefectures or soon even the multiplication table: diagrammatic machines will tend more and more to take over such operations. A new sort of indolence, a 'right to laziness', **5** a 'right to madness', **6** is opening up for us. As stringency can be referred to machines, the machines of desire will be able smoothly to take up the path of efficacious molecular connections again. To be sure it is only a matter of a point of view that is objectively possible here, because in fact the politics of implanting repressive equipment doesn't stop thwarting and sabotaging the collective assemblages of desire that would allow it to be realised on a large scale. In order to be affirmed, the new machinic memory, the new social organisation – for which decision-making centres will be arranged in a network and no longer subjected to one another hierarchically – will thus not be able to make do with the mass rejection of repressive equipment, especially the miniaturised equipment like the power of the school, medical power, the couple, the superego. It will have to take into account the particular reproductive power of which they are the bearers. It is condemned, in some way, to itself produce modes of semiotisation and assemblages that not only expropriate them of their current powers but which, in addition, will continuously de-phase the incessant return of the function of capitalist equipment.

Abstract machines

What then would happen if the hierarchies, the bureaucracies, the phallogocracies, the gerontocracies, were obliged to 'let go of the control levers'? What would the new consistency of the social field be? To try to advance with this question, we must return once again to the distinction that we proposed between the function of Collective equipment and the function of collective assemblage (machinic assemblage and assemblage of enunciation). The putting into play of these functions – in particular at the level of the networks of Collective equipment – has allowed us to show that the consistency of the social field doesn't rest on any system of transcendental invariants, any more than does that of language or the libido. What makes a 'passage' possible from one level to another – from an economic to an 'ideological' level, for example, what guarantees what we have called social transversality, doesn't depend on principles, categories or elements that are delimited once and for all. Everything is to be remade, every time. Or, more exactly, it falls to networks of concrete machines that manifest, in a more or less transitory way, what we will call systems of *abstract deterritorialisation machines*, to establish this consistency and this transversality in given historical periods and conditions. The abstract machines around which the concrete assemblages and equipment – to which we will return in the third part of this book – crystallise are not external to social temporality, they traverse, produce and reproduce it. They negotiate the regulation of coefficients of deterritorialisation specific to each semiotic component and to each encoding component. But in passing from Equipment to Assemblages, one passes from one regime of abstract machines to another. With Equipment, abstract machines in their entirety depend on a single command – Capital – around which an entire general staff is organised, which grids the coordinates and values of the social field in its entirety in a dualist fashion: the Signifier and Non-Sense, the Useful and the Useless, Reason and Madness, the Beautiful and the Ugly, Music and Noise, etc. With Assemblages, the abstract machines and consequently the concrete machines that actualise them aren't organised according to systematic computerisable 'implication trees', but in a rhizomatic fashion according to formulae that are irreducible to the binary decomposition that could only make them lose their specific traits to the matters of expression and matters of encoding concerned. One cannot 'translate' the machinic traits of a biological process into physiochemical or astrophysical traits. One can compare them, one can make numbers, topologies, formalisations of every kind pass into one another but not the position that it occupies in the phylum of machinic mutations. Hierarchies of invariants always remain external to the processes themselves and it is the same with the institutions of equipment and of the theories that are founded on them. One has, on one side, the Law, Theory; on the other, praxis, experimentation. But a theory-praxis functioning in the living parts of a society rupturing with the hierarchy of pre-established values will articulate systems of abstract machines deterritorialising onto themselves – and thus not in any way eternally – connecting to one another in an infinite rhizomatic expansion, not so as to fix and stratify the socius but to ensure its transitory regulation.

What makes desire work in a group, what makes a theory work, an experiment, an art form? What makes everything topple into the clutches of a repressive power formation at a given moment? What makes a certain kind of abstract machine – whether the arborescent abstract machines that refer in the last instance to Capital or the polycentric, polyvocal abstract machines that function according to a whole entangling of open lines – 'take power' in particular circumstances? When abstract machines succeed in escaping the regime of the capitalist economy of flows (that is to say, when they free themselves from the institutional

supervision, the equipment of power that hierarchise, ritualise and reterritorialise them according to an abstract and transcendent universal order), it is because they have ceased to be assimilable from near or far to Platonic ideas, Kantian noumena, Hegelian or Marxist dialectical moments, Lacanian structural mathemes of the unconscious, indeed even the modest 'states' of systems theory, **7** in which forms they emerged from different theoretical horizons. On this side of the spatio-temporal coordinates and the specific traits of different components of expression and encoding, then, they crystallise the *knot of a problem*, they guarantee the consistency of a 'state of fact' which, at the level of concrete machines, will find itself fixed, 'contingenced' in history and the social field. They metabolise passageways between different strata, they model the process of subjectivation – without it being a question here of a universal subjectivity – they open up or close down the possible, either by allowing sometimes minuscule lines of flight of desire, to escape, or by setting off revolutions in chain reaction, or by allowing themselves to be taken over by systems of stratification. In the case of the collective equipment functions and of collective assemblage functions that it is a question of here, their role is one of *problematizing the political matter of expression* with which the group is confronted, what we have called its 'optional matter', and not one of staging or of representing. There are no political universals, no 'optional matter' in general. At the heart of every particular situation, of every disciplinary machine, of every surveillance system, a certain type of micropolitical virus is at work, a certain constellation of abstract machines is subjected to a power formation. Although they entertain certain relations with historical, pre-war fascism, the different strains of micro-fascism that are at work in the United States and the countries of the East, rich countries and poor countries, Arab countries and Israel, are, in the paths they follow, infinitely differentiated. Thus no global response is possible, no 'broad antifascist front' to block the way of this new threat: *fascism has already taken place/passed!* It oozes from the pores of capitalist societies. Consequently one must seize hold of it where it has taken up residence, in its specific forms, and that implies a generalised struggle of every instance on a multitude of 'fronts'. The politics of desire essentially concerns these assemblages of 'particles of possibility' that abstract machines constitute, as much at the level of a group, an institution, or a theory as of an art form. There is, then, no struggle for freedom in general but the construction at every level of liberation machines.

Why talk here of abstract machines? Because if one allows micropolitical problems to depend exclusively on concrete machines, that is to say, on social institutions, equipment of all kinds, systems of interaction between individuals, or systems of semiotic interaction, on ready-constituted theory, on programmes, etc., one ends up reducing them so that they are nothing more than ideological superstructures or apparatuses in Althusser's sense. **8** Consequently, whatever system of over-determination one cares to imagine so as to recover a hold on the real, will be worthless. The infrastructures which in the current state of the sciences are generally conceived as necessarily being ruled by invariant laws, will always have the last word. Our 'detour' via abstract machines doesn't imply any idealist mediation. In effect, it is not a question here of a system of ideas being related to an instance closed in on itself! Abstract machines bring about a direct passage between states of signs and states of things. With them, mental reterritorialisations pass into the background. The short-circuit that they bring about between the deterritorialisations of material flows and the deterritorialisations of semiotic flows – in other words, diagrammatic processes – occur flush with signs and flush with the 'material'. Abstract machines work the real, they fabricate it on the basis of topologies, equations, multiple sets of references, but they also work the systems of signs so as to place them on the same level as historical and cosmic realities and, under certain conditions, can prevent them from falling into the fixist world of universal paradigms – what elsewhere we have called 'paradigmatic perversion'. So we consider that before being an affair of material strata, of energy, of forms or structures, the 'being' that is at the foundation of the 'existent' – at least in the social field considered from the point of view of its economy of desire – arises primarily from this 'optional matter' such as it is treated by the abstract machines. In other words, being is not reduced here to anything identifiable or localisable in eternal and universal coordinates! It is a question here solely of collective assemblages putting into play inter-connection machines, coding machines, semiotisation and subjectivation machines, cutting out problematics, arranging territorialities, transversalising biological, ecological, economic, personological, institutional, etc. strata. Such assemblages cannot be considered as being the subjects of a structure. They both take part and are a part that is taken in the 'machinations' that play out at multiple levels:

1 Abstract levels at which either:

- New 'constructive' deterritorialisations, or
- Reterritorialisations on the part of centralist despotic machines such as Capital, the Signifier, etc., are brought about.

2 Concrete levels at which either:

- Balancing of relations of force, ritualisations, relative naturalisations of diagrammatic processes resting on the miniaturisation of the equipment of power, on increasingly tentacular programming and planning, or
- Liberating tactics and strategies tending to optimise the collective assemblage function to the detriment of the equipment function, are brought about.

Bureaucratic socialism, the highest stage of capitalism

We refuse to separate relations of production from relations of semiotisation, as the majority of theoreticians who invoke Marxism do. The control of the means of production by the exploiting classes or castes, is indissociable from the control of the collective means of semiotisation which, although less visible, is no less fundamental. The more and more marked de-phasing of the relations of production and productive processes therefore does not, in our view, depend solely on an economic infrastructure. It even only constitutes one particular aspect of that which develops more generally between the ensemble of social relations and

the collective libidinal economy; these latter, for their part, don't specifically arise either from a superstructure determined 'in the last instance', according to the consecrated expression – by the economic base. Whatever names are given to societies founded on the exploitation of labour and of the libido, whatever the historically discernabilised classes or bureaucratic hydra, with difficult to determine outlines, who profit from it, one is in the presence of one and the same system of collective purpose: the reduction of useful production onto market value and the reification of the value of desire as use and exchange value.

Today, societies that call themselves socialist, like those that invoke profit and capital, are constrained to cling more and more tightly, sometimes against the wishes of their most enlightened leaders, like Khrushchev and Kennedy, to modes of semiotic 'subjection' that run counter to the direction of history, and that in spite of all their attempts at adaptation, institutional innovation and miniaturisation of the equipment of desire that they inject into the masses. Thus, for quite some time already the conditions for revolution have reached maturity without any social class appearing on the horizon to attempt to adjust the socius to the immense deterritorialisation that is traversing it and to redirect productive forces that on a global scale are the object of fabulous squandering. From the point of view of the economy of desire and semiotic integration into the dominant values, the working classes have never fundamentally set themselves apart from the bourgeoisie and the bureaucrats, and everything leads one to think that they will be led to do this less and less. In fact, they tend everywhere, to differing degrees, to collaborate actively in the enterprises of subjection of capitalist societies.

The fundamental objective of taking political power at the level of the State, by the 'avant-garde' of the proletariat, is considered by Marxist-Leninists to be the condition *sine qua non* of an autonomous coming into consciousness of itself by the working class. In fact, this objective hasn't in the slightest avoided the contamination of the working class by bourgeois ideology. On the contrary, it is by way of the integration of the 'avant-garde' into the rules of the political and union game established by State power that it was possible for this contamination to be extended into broad layers of the population. The bureaucrats of the worker's movement have been in some respects the initiators of the semiotic integration of the working class. As such, one can legitimately consider them as Collective equipment, in the broader sense that we have given the term here. Thus today one can only conceive of a struggle against State bureaucracy and, in a more general way, against all concrete manifestations of State power, on condition that one envisage in parallel the dismantling of the bureaucratic structures that are paralysing the workers' movement, popular and minority movements of every kind. State power is everywhere and it is worth everywhere giving oneself the specific means of flushing it out, including in the heads of the 'masses' and their leaders. But if such dismantling were carried out in conditions of demoralisation and without putting into place other kinds of assemblages of struggle, it would bring about an immense social regression. The places where this new problematic is emerging are thereby on the point of becoming the new hot points of social and political struggle. The kind of analytic-militant struggle that is becoming possible in a certain number of kinds of Collective equipment, administrations, social sectors, etc., will not always be considered marginal in relation to the major struggles in workerist citadels: Renault, the railways, etc. And already there seems little doubt that if one day a revolutionary surpassing becomes possible, it will notarise from these citadels but probably from one of those sectors that appear today to be secondary in this eyes of the militant representation and morality.

By substituting political 'optional matters' for globalising sociological categories, one is in a better position to follow the contaminations that are brought about between power formations of all sizes, and to grasp how absurd it is to aim to change society, to want to construct an economic order that no longer rests on the exploitation of one class by another, by contenting oneself with transferring State power from the representatives of one class to those of another and by wishing that the State then progressively lose its usefulness as coercive force, starting to 'wither' of its own accord. State power is not just the existence of coercive forces that are exercised at the level of large social groupings; it is equally at work at the level of the microscopic cogs of society. This doesn't in the least signify that it is advisable to except everything from a simple calling into question of the individual, or from a massive negation of the family! Thus the fact that not only does centralised power have a politics concerning the conjugal couple and the family, ⁹ but that a micropolitics of the State functions within them as well does not for all that signify that these institutions can be condemned as such and be rejected out of hand! Even if it is only for a little while when they get together, a couple can function as an assemblage of desire: that is the time when every hope of a liberation from parental tutelage is permitted. And even when a family seems to have been converted once and for all into a phallocratic machine, despite the worst outbursts of phallocratic authoritarianism, despite the worst fits of jealousy, despite the micro-fascist climate in which its members are very often shrouded, it can let minuscule lines of hope be reborn, fleeting tendernesses: 'let's go on holiday, everything will be better, things will change ...' And thinking about it, everyone knows that given the state of chronic dependency that social formations as whole reduce individuals, no matter what tyranny ends up seeming better than solitude! State power, the exploitation of work, the alienation of desire are not secreted solely by the grand capitalist or social-bureaucratic formations that work over diverse social groups, the State and individuals. The two big antagonist myths of the socialists at the start of the century – that is to say, that of the education of the masses and that of their Bolshevik militarisation – should be placed back to back: education controlled by State power working towards an adaptation of the workers to the libidinal models of the bourgeoisie, and in particular to an individuation of their enunciation; and their 'militantisation', under all sorts of modalities unfaithfully playing into the hands of bureaucratic centralism and diverse forms of technocracy.

A new type of struggle

A new type of struggle is trying to find its feet, less as a model than as a demonstrable 'precedent' that another field of possibility

is well and truly open. The abstract machine that is in question here could announce itself in the following way: yes it is possible to do something in all these situations which, today, seem to be completely blocked, like in days past at Lip **10** or today with the judicial system or prostitutes ... Yes it is possible for a couple to 'change its way of living' or to do the same with children, when one confronts oneself directly ... In the sector of social Equipment, that devoted to childhood in particular, a whole series of often confused and contradictory microscopic conflicts with regard to collective life, the role of educationalists, psychoanalysts, teachers are played out within establishments. Here too it would be wrong to think that it is a matter of struggles without any importance. When one approaches such questions with union representatives or politicians, they generally respond that such struggles don't concern them, that they belong to the initiatives of the rank and file. But in discussing further with them, one notices that all the problems of physical and mental health, education, life-style, etc., have a well-anchored reality in the dominant redundancies, the self-evident facts generated by power, such as they are conveyed by the media: to look after the sick, you need doctors, nurses, hospitals – who would dare claim the contrary! To look after the mad you need psychiatrists, psychiatric hospitals, and also – why not – psychoanalysts; to educate children, the teaching body of schools is needed, but also active methods; to maintain social order, a body of policemen is needed, etc. And that all requires funding, equipment, good administrators, good democratic control by elected politicians, on the part of the childrens' parents, etc.

The optional matter here consists in the fact that no matter what 'social problem' can be drawn towards the equipment and distanced from potential collective assemblages. Without noticing it, one makes it the concern of specialists, programmes, norms, budgets, supervision, etc., and one refuses to envisage that it might be articulated with collective experiments, the life of a neighbourhood, a taking in charge by 'users'. Now it is only in an everyday struggle, at the level of everyday life, that relations of force can be altered between on the one hand specialist knowledge and the political authority of the representatives of the established order, and on the other, this side of constituted persons and objects, the sometimes embryonic desire, which is finding itself through a discourse that is initially inaudible (that of children, the mad, delinquents or marginals, etc., for example). Rather than accepting as destiny the excessive growth of social condensers – a sort of semiotic combine in which individuals and social relations get machined – which grid and control the four corners of the social field, can one not imagine the passage to an active de-equipmentalising and collective reassembling that bypasses too massive institutional structures: ministries, bureaucratic oversight, factitious hierarchies? A multi-centred system of social control would be enabled, having a maximal proximity with conditions of all kinds, respecting singularities of desire and making State power wither *here and now* ?

In claiming to establish itself as a new science, Marxism supposed itself to be different from all other doctrines. It sought to base the authority of its statements – and, between the lines, the authoritarianism of its practices (and that since the establishing of the First International) – on the prestige of other sciences. Next to it, utopias of all kinds, generous ideas, became ridiculous and dangerous. 'One can only mislead the masses if one's viewpoints on struggle are not founded on a scientific basis.' Not only did Marxism want the revolution to be backed up by the sciences, but equally on the growth of the forces of production. Thus besides the working class, the major motors of history have for it become the sciences and technology, and the working classes of the nineteenth century no longer exist today except in the heads of ideologues and retro militants! It's not a matter of saying that the molecular revolution will be made against progress and the well-being of the working classes. It simply seems to us that in large measure it will happen alongside them, allowing them to evolve, even decline, following their own paths. A certain dogmatic ideal of the sciences and a certain ascetic, moralising ideal of workerist ideology no longer coincides with the realities of today. Other scientific assemblages, other social assemblages, open up other points of view. The revolution to come will not be inscribed in the moulds of the past, it will not be synonymous with a 'step backwards' or with the freezing of the current situation, like that which is envisaged by the new technocratic mythology that is centred on the theme of a return to 'zero growth'! We think, on the contrary, that it will be entirely compatible with a tumultuous development in the sciences, of the forces of production, artistic creations, experiments of all kinds, rupturing radically, it must be emphasised, with the forms that they had yesterday!

Let us note, in passing, that the promotion of a different myth, by Ivan Illich, **11** concerning a necessary return to human-scale tools, seems to go in precisely the direction of the alienating miniaturisation of equipment that we are condemning here. The ideal of socialism at the 'human scale', opposed to the existence of mega-machines is, to our mind, a bad utopia. What is in question according to us is not the size of the tools, machines or equipment, but the politics of human assemblages as much at the scale of microscopic desires as of grand power formations. The more the family and the school, for example, have been miniaturised in the course of development of the last two centuries, the more tyrannical they have become, at the unconscious level in particular. When, today, psychiatry starts to desert the 'walls of the asylum' so as to become invested in equipment outside the hospital, or even on the psychoanalyst's couch, the alienation of deviance doesn't for all that lessen any: it becomes focused on new kinds of practices, personae, and institutions, which are on the point of serving as a reference model for the elaboration of an 'advanced technology' of power. **12** In certain circumstances, Collective equipment on the large scale, like universities – semiotic subjection machines for the selection, the modelling, of an elite adapted to the semiotics of power, to the style and attitudes of future executives – have started to function in the register of struggles of desire and have served as a support for the emergence of collective assemblages of enunciation. During the 1960s, one saw American universities become focal points of revolutionary effervescence at the same time as they continued, more or less, to play their habitual role as an equipment of normalisation. In these conditions, it is understandable that traditional political organisations find it impossible to appreciate the exact significance of the movements that can develop there!

An analytico-militant labour at all scales

One could multiply the examples illustrating the incapacity of sociological classifications to account for the politics of desire: let us consider, for example, the functioning of an urban mega-machine – to borrow Lewis Mumford's expression – like the agglomeration of New York. One may think that it is incompatible with any liberatory assemblage of desire at all! And yet, it seems to us that despite (or because of) its crowding and subjection effects, despite the misery and violence that rules there, despite the dismay and solitude that seems to mark every one of its inhabitants in one way or another, even this urban continent, a gigantic semiotic cyclotron, produces a certain kind of economy of desire, which is inimitable, irreplaceable, and is felt as such by those who are attached to it as if to a drug. What comes into play here, from the point of view of the economy of desire, is not the conurbation, the air pollution, the absence of green spaces, nor even – to a certain point – the concentration of decision-making and bureaucratic centres, but the way in which all these things are semiotised, the way in which in this respect the assemblages of enunciation are tangled and disentangled. Before knowing what a 'social project', to use the fashionable expression, ought to be, it would be worth pinpointing what collective life projects might be and, before equipping society, concerning oneself with the turn that the assemblages of desire are taking. Micro-fascist crystallisations of desire, applied to the apparently most rational, the most harmonious, of projects, transformed the USSR and China into continent-wide gulags, whilst micro-revolutionary crystallisations of desire have, for their part, started to 'change life' at a small and sometimes not so small scale, for the inhabitants of certain dilapidated neighbourhoods in San Francisco. Once again, this is not the level of priority and there is no order-word of the type 'get your own house in order before you try to change society!' We are simply affirming that change in institutions and equipment at the large-scale calls, at the same time, for a change in the molecular equipment and micropolitics of desire. It is here and now, everywhere and at all scales, that an analytico-militant labour is necessary so as to escape from the cogs, the snowballing phenomena likely to accumulate micro-fascisms. But the large repressive formations, which have a 'hold' on the social field and which don't stop injecting back into it the micro-fascist drugs that they carry, must be combatted at the same time and without delay.

One of the roles of collective assemblages at ground level (at 'grassroots', as the Americans like to say) would consist precisely in making such relations permanently evident. Not so as to make headlines from them or photos, which would be consumed in a sort of contemplation-digestion the final function of which is an assimilation of every singularity of desire to common values, the dominant redundancies; but rather to make them act either in the social real or the modes of semiotisation of the unconscious. The putting into relation will not be the result of a manipulation by power which, in the end – on reading a magazine or newspaper – will bring about a forced association in people's heads, conditioning them mechanically to make the 'connection'. Nor will it result from the speculative hypotheses of researchers or the inspired intuitions of psychoanalysts; it will become an analytico-militant programme ¹³ that consists in 'learning/teaching', let's say, semiotising collectively, the original conjunctions that have taken place in a particular situation between sectors of very different struggles. One is then dealing with something that doesn't take place only at the level of a formal solidarity, but at the level of the intelligence and of the heart (there are examples in Bellochio's film *Fou à délier*, about the hospital in Parma, of the workers in a steel mill looking after mentally retarded and Downs patients; in a completely different domain: during the imprisonment of the poet Yann Houssin, ¹⁴ on the pretext of creating soldier committees, there was the constitution in Nîmes of a network of people concerned as much with military affairs as with poetry and regional struggle). What separates a Corsican from a Breton or a Parisian are, apparently, socio-economic, linguistic, even ecological characteristics, but in reality, it is micropolitical crystallisations that are incarnated at the molecular level, like two ways to love, to perceive the cosmos, to speak, to dance, read and write, etc. Grasped from this angle, certain semiotic components of the 'Corsican question' can join up with those of the Bretons or those of women's liberation, the liberation of children, of homosexuals, etc., rather than closing shut, as is the case with a certain number of autonomist movements, in an opaquely idiosyncratic and reactionary space.

There are not two successive times, one of which would consist in first changing society and the other in [then] concerning oneself with what happens in real life. The politics of rhizomes and maps, which we will oppose in the second section of this book to those of trees and tracings, apply to the same objects and, most often, concurrently. They aim as much at the large systems of social subjection as at the miniaturised power formations that are at work in small groups, the family or individual. In these conditions, there is no salvation to be expected from prioritising a return to nature, to good feeling, tools within arm's reach, 'convivial communities' ... Cities exist, so do armies, police forces, 'multinationals', centralised parties, industrial complexes, electoral traditions. There is no question of evading all that by waving a magic wand! But one can at least try not to be taken prisoner by it, not to be the active accomplice of such mechanisms, and beyond, and start to make this type of object and molar relation, de-exist! Is it possible to hollow them out from the inside when one cannot avoid them, and to dismantle them from the outside when the opportunity presents itself – even if it means carefully preparing such opportunities? In a word, is it possible to undo the supposedly objective laws of a society that claims to 'lay down the law'?

¹ Which we will later describe as a 'diagrammatic function'.

² Friedrich Nietzsche *On the Genealogy of Morals* translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1969) p. 61.

³ Memory, as Francis Yates shows us, has long depended on highly territorialised 'memory' machines (the architectural rhetoric machines derived from the *Ad Herennium* of Antiquity), or the highly sophisticated machines like those of Lulle (where concepts are represented by letters of the alphabet which turn around an axis, and figures by concentric circles on which the letters referring to concepts are found and which, when these wheels are rotated allow combinations of concepts to be obtained). See

Francis Yates *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966).

4 Criticising the abusive export of the language of informatics outside its own domain, Cornelius Castoriadis asks himself whether the concept of order that biology and anthropology need is necessarily identical to that of physics (Castoriadis *Science moderne et Interrogation philosophique* Encyclopaedia Universalis Organum, 1975). In effect, and unlike the order of physico-chemical strata, 'human' orders seem to be inseparable from collective assemblages and formations of power, that is to say, from modes of semiotisation that expose, arrange, and guarantee them ... independently of any transcendental guarantee.

5 Paul Lafargue *The Right to Be Lazy* (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2012).

6 Jean-Claude Polack and Danielle Sabourin *La Borde ou le droit à la folie* (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1976).

7 Ludwig von Bertalanffy *General System Theory* (New York: Basic, 1965).

8 See Chapter 10, 'The Traps of Ideology'.

9 In numerous domains, it is the category of the family or household that constitutes the institutional object of reference. For example, national accounts continue to talk of a 'household budget' with regard to single people! On the genealogy of familialist intimacy see Lionel Murard and Patrick Zylberman 'Le Petit travailleur infatigable' *Recherches* 25, 1976.

10 Factory in Besançon that was the focus of a series of industrial upheavals as well as an experiment in worker management in the 1970s [TN].

11 Ivan Illich *Tools for Conviviality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973).

12 See 'History of Area Psychiatry' *Recherches* 17, 1975 and Robert Castel *Le Psychanalysme* (Paris, Maspero, republished Paris 10/18, 1975).

13 The term 'programme' is not employed here in the sense that one speaks, for example, of the 'Common programme of the Left' but in the sense that sado-masochists talk about a programme, that is to say as means for marking out an experiment that everywhere exceeds their own 'predictions', hence the mystery and the fascination, the impression of something that has 'never been seen' despite the ritualised character of programmed phases. In contemporary music, one talks equally of 'programmed music' when a significant part of the music is left up to the performers and the score gives nothing more than broad indications, general directions.

14 Tristan Cabral (Yann Houssin) *Ouvrez le feu* (Paris: Plasma, 1975).

Félix Guattari; THE LINES OF FLIGHT

For another world of possibilities

Translated by Andrew Goffey

taken from here

← PREVIOUS NEXT →

META

CONTACT

FORCE-INC/MILLE PLATEAUX

IMPRESSUM

DATENSCHUTZERKLÄRUNG

TAXONOMY

CATEGORIES

TAGS

AUTHORS

ALL INPUT

SOCIAL

FACEBOOK

INSTAGRAM

TWITTER